

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5496

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 19304

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OREP, UR, US

SUBJECT: CDEL RIBICOFF/BELLMAN: INITIAL PLANNING

RE: STATE 200726

1. WE OFFER HERewith OUR COMMENTS ON THE INITIAL PLANNING FOR CODEL RIBICOFF/BELLMAN, AS OUTLINED IN STATE 200726. (WE HOPE, BY THE WAY, THAT COMMUNICATIONS ON THIS SUBJECT CAN SOON BE MOVED OUT OF THE "NODIS" CATEGORY.)

2. WE SUGGEST THAT IN DISCUSSING THE VISIT WITH THE SOVIETS, THE FOCUS BE KEPT ON THE FORMAL TALKS IN MOSCOW. THESE, PLUS THE LIKELY MEETING WITH BREZHNEV, WILL DETERMINE THE DEGREE OF SUCCESS OF THE VISIT, AT THIS DELICATE TIME IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP. DURING THE LAST COMPARABLE VISIT, THAT OF CODEL ALBERT IN 1975, THREE KREMLIN DISCUSSION SESSIONS (EACH LASTING ABOUT TWO-AND-ONE-HALF HOURS) WERE HELD. MOST CODEL ALBERT PARTICIPANTS FELT AT LEAST ONE MORE SESSION WOULD HAVE BEEN WORTHWHILE. WHILE THE SOVIET "PARLIAMENTARIANS" WILL INITIALLY DELIVER CANNED SPEECHES, THE SUBSEQUENT GIVE AND TAKE CAN BE MOST WORTHWHILE.

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3. VISITS TO CITIES OTHER THAN MOSCOW ARE USEFUL FOR PURPOSES OF GENERAL CODEL ORIENTATION, ALTHOUGH OUR EXPERIENCE HAS BEEN THAT FORMAL MEETINGS WITH CITY OFFICIALS ARE NOT PARTICULARLY REWARDING, BECAUSE THEY TEND TO BE SO RIGIDLY STRUCTURED BY THE SOVIET SIDE. IT WOULD BE QUITE DIFFERENT IF THE CODEL MAKES A STRONG PITCH, AS WE HOPE IT WILL, AND SUCCEEDS IN

GETTING MEETINGS WITH THE LIKES OF ROMANOV IN LENINGRAD AND SHEVARDNADZE IN TBILISI. VISITS TO ECONOMIC ENTERPRISES, AT LEAST ONE FARM AND ONE FACTORY, SHOULD BE INCLUDED. IN ANY CASE, THE CODEL SHOULD BE URGED TO MAKE ALL PROGRAM REQUESTS AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE MOMENT, GIVEN THE SLOW-MOVING NATURE OF THE SOVIET BUREAUCRACY.

4. WE SUGGEST THAT THE FOLLOWING SPECIFIC PROGRAM ITEMS BE DISCUSSED WITH THE CODEL DURING THIS INITIAL PLANNING PERIOD:

-- CODEL, OR AT LEAST SOME OF ITS MEMBERS, MAY WISH TO MEET WITH THE U.S. BUSINESS COMMUNITY IN MOSCOW. INFORMAL BREAKFAST AT THE COMMERCIAL OFFICE WOULD BE A CONVENIENT WAY OF HANDLING THIS;

-- A MEETING WITH THE RESIDENT U.S. PRESS CORPS NORMALLY HELD SHORTLY BEFORE THE CODEL'S DEPARTURE IS VIRTUALLY OBLIGATORY; WE CAN USE THE COMMERCIAL OFFICE FOR THIS PURPOSE (AS WE DID FOR CODEL ALBERT), IF THE CODEL WISHES;

-- THE SUPREME SOVIET UNDOUBTEDLY WILL TREAT THE CODEL TO A KREMLIN DINNER; FOLLOWING THE PRECEDENTS OF CODEL HUMPHREY/SCOTT AND CODEL ALBERT, THE CODEL CONFIDENTIAL

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PRESUMABLY WILL WISH TO RECIPROCATATE WITH A SPASO HOUSE RECEPTION; WE HOPE THE CODEL WILL BE ABLE TO FUND SUCH AN AFFAIR (APPROXIMATE COST WOULD BE \$1,000).

5. WE DOUBT THAT THE SOVIETS WILL AGREE TO PARTICIPATION BY WIVES IN THE FORMAL TALKS IN MOSCOW. WE RECALL THAT FOR CODEL ALBERT, SOME WIVES SAT IN THE "STAFF SECTION," TO ONE SIDE OF THE CONFERENCE TABLE, DURING THE KREMLIN MEETINGS. BUT WE SUSPECT THE SOVIETS WILL ARGUE HARD THAT ONLY OFFICIAL DELEGATION MEMBERS SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN FORMAL SUBSTANTIVE MEETINGS, PARTICULARLY IN MOSCOW.

6. AT THIS EARLY PHASE IN PLANNING FOR THE CODEL, WE BELIEVE SPECIAL ATTENTION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO SELECTING THE MAIN CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATION WITH THE SUPREME SOVIET STAFFERS WHO WILL PUT THE PROGRAM TOGETHER. OUR RECOMMENDATION, BASED ON OUR EXPERIENCE WITH CODELS HOSTED BY THE SUPREME SOVIET, IS THAT THE MOST RELIABLE AND EFFECTIVE CHANNEL IS "CODEL - DEPARTMENT - U.S. EMBASSY - SUPREME SOVIET STAFF," WITH THE SOVIET EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON AS WELL AS THE MFA USA DIVISION KEPT FULLY INFORMED. IT WAS CRYSTAL

CLEAR DURING CODEL ALBERT, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT KEY
DECISIONS WERE BEING MADE ON THE SOVIET SIDE BY THE
SUPREME SOVIET STAFF, NOT BY THE MFA USA DIVISION.
WE SUSPECT THIS IS EVEN MORE TRUE NOW THAT BREZHNEV
HAS BECOME CHAIRMAN OF THE SUPREME SOVIET
PRESIDIUM. TOON

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